



CREATING POSITIVE *Futures*

Empowering

**Kansas community
volunteers to assess,
engage and celebrate
since 1970.**

Partnerships

Opportunities for partnering with us include funding, recognition, assessments, tools, grant writing support, grant searches, facilitation, entrepreneurship resources, workforce development, placemaking, housing and economic development resources.



what our communities are saying



What was once a drab concrete wall as you entered our lovely square has been transformed into a beautiful scene of flowers and blue sky! The visual difference of our square is amazing! It makes you proud of our town that we could create something so beautiful!

– Laura Musil, Blue Rapids Community Action Team

Who Are We

The Kansas Community Empowerment program, administered by K-State Research and Extension, is a grassroots, volunteer effort to improve the quality of life in local communities. Each Kansas community is unique but shares a common bond: a rich heritage based on self-reliance and community pride. Our program is dedicated to empowering communities by providing education, recognition, resource, and funding connections.

Through the program, local communities identify what they would like to preserve, create, or improve for their future. Then, working with the resources of K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Department of Commerce, community volunteers pull together to create their ideal community future.

K-State Research and Extension, Kansas Department of Commerce and Kansas PRIDE, Inc. (consisting of private companies, associations and community member representatives) partner together to make the Kansas Community Empowerment program successful.

what our communities are saying



Wilson's vitality and quality of life have been enormously influenced by the Kansas Community Empowerment program... the outreach that staff provides is extremely valuable for many small towns like Wilson. The program helped Wilson build a city park with a play area, splash pad, and shelter building with bathrooms and a community garden.

— David Criswell, Wilson PRIDE

Our Resources

Our program provides multiple tools, resources, and support options, which benefit participating communities. Some of those benefits include:

- » Onsite community assessments.
- » Self-assessment survey tools.
- » Volunteer training.
- » Assistance with organizing.
- » Vision and mission development.
- » Program grants.
- » External grant and funding searches for community needs.
- » Recognition opportunities.
- » Networking with other communities.
- » Record keeping database.
- » Additional resources from program partners and their nationwide networks.



Learn more about our resources at kce.k-state.edu/resources/



Awards

The Kansas Community Empowerment program provides award opportunities to participating communities. These awards come in the form of ceremonial recognition and grants.

RECOGNITION

The Kansas Community Empowerment Program provides opportunities for communities to recognize great work and highlight those that make that work possible. Work with us to highlight local efforts at an event or festivity of your choosing.

GRANTS

The Kansas Community Empowerment program has been intentional concerning the design and implementation of our grants system and works to provide grant opportunities to fit the needs of participating communities. The grants system is designed to allow communities to gain skills in grant writing and provides coaching to communities that apply. Every community is different; the Kansas PRIDE, Inc. Board of Directors, and our other partners regularly engage participating communities to make sure that our grants system provides the best opportunities to everyone we serve.

what our sponsors are saying



Kansas Community Empowerment embodies the spirit that Blue Valley Technologies/Networks Plus promotes across its service area and is, in part, why it has previously chosen to and will continue to be a corporate sponsor well into the future.

– Jada Ackerman, Blue Valley Technologies



Learn more about our sponsorship opportunities at kce.k-state.edu/support/



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

K-STATE
Research and Extension

KANSAS
COMMERCE



kce.k-state.edu

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All sponsorship funds raised by Kansas PRIDE, Inc., a 501(c) 3 organization, go directly to Kansas communities through project grants, educational opportunities and recognition. Overhead and staff expenses are provided by K-State Research and Extension and the Kansas Department of Commerce.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of K-State Research and Extension, Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts.

July 2024

2024 *Sponsors*



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



FRIENDS OF PRIDE

Doug Helmke
Justin Campbell
Craig Freeman

Benevity
Jaime Menon
Jan Steen

Thank you to our sponsors who make community recognition and funding opportunities possible.

2024 *Partners*



PARTNERSHIPS EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

The Kansas Community Empowerment program is a partnership of K-State Research and Extension, Kansas Department of Commerce, Kansas PRIDE, Inc., and the Kansas Masons and is supported in the northwest area by the Dane G. Hansen Foundation.

With the help of our partners, we promote an enhanced quality of life for the citizens and communities of Kansas through education, leadership development and recognition.



KANSAS FREEMASONS
ON THE LEVEL



Thank you to our program partners who help make community improvement efforts possible.


2024

Community Outreach



73 
communities

 **438**
volunteers

1,131 
projects
313 youth-related projects

\$1,673,982
value of volunteer hours

56,512 volunteer hours

(2023 Independent Sector Rate for value of volunteer time was \$29.69/hour.)

\$423,628
public and private fundraising efforts

452 
partnerships

\$1,351,237 grant dollars reported by participating communities

274 external grant funding sources

provided to communities through Kansas Community Empowerment program

2024 *Awards*



PROJECT EXCELLENCE

Local Kansas Community Empowerment programs are encouraged to nominate a high-quality project for state-level recognition. Communities of all levels (Growth, Action and Excellence) can apply for these awards. The 2024 awardees are:

- Alton – Hay Bale Banners
- Alton - Community Room Floor Project

RISING STAR

The Rising Star award is for any individual, business, organization, elected official, benefactor or youth who has made an outstanding contribution to your local Kansas Community Empowerment program. This year's community awardees are:

- Alton - Dorothy Ellsworth
- Blue Rapids - Lonnie and Sheri Johnson; Laura Musil
- Wakefield - Robert Thurlow

COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE

Communities of Excellence receive statewide recognition and grant opportunities to support efforts related to long-term community goals. The 2024 Community of Excellence awardee was Alton:



2024 *Grants*



COMMUNITY OF ACTION

Community of Action Grant is a funding opportunity provided by Kansas PRIDE, Inc. With a 1:1 match, communities can receive funding up to a maximum amount of \$2,000 per project. The 2024 grant awardees are:

- Grainfield - Welcome Sign - \$1,225
- Toronto - New Sidewalk - \$1,225
- Vermillion - Beautification of Community Center - \$1,225
- Revitalize YC (Yates Center) - Historic Markers - \$1,225
- Delia - Thrift Store HVAC System - \$1,671
- Larned - Schnack Park Sunshade - \$1,737
- Norton - Norton Community Garden Coalition Greenhouse - \$1,737
- Potwin - Potwin Festive Decorations - \$1,105



2024 *Grants*



COMMUNITY PROMOTION

An opportunity provided through our partnership and the generosity of the Kansas Masons, Community Marketing/Promotion Grants are \$1,000, 1:1 matching grants available for the promotion of communities. This year's Community Promotion awardees are:

- Erie - Fairgrounds and Thrift Shop Enhancement - \$1,000
- Toronto - HWY 54 Promotional Signage - \$1,000
- Blue Rapids - Family Fun Fest/Winter Pole Banners - \$646.25
- Leonardville - Enhancing Community Vitality Feather Flags and Message Boards - \$1,000

VOLUNTEERS IMPACT PRIDE

An opportunity provided through our partnership and the generosity of the Kansas Masons, Volunteers Impact PRIDE (VIP) Grants are up to \$15,000, 1:1 matching grants available for the promotion of communities. This year's VIP awardee was:

- Blue Rapids - Playground Equipment - \$8,307

